Voices from the Field

Real-Time Evaluation of UNICEF Somalia Humanitarian Response to the 2017 Pre-Famine Crisis

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The rainfall failure of 2016-2017 in Somalia led to a humanitarian crisis, resulting in a Level-2 emergency by UNICEF. A real-time evaluation was commissioned to analyse the appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness of the response. Methods included a literature review, key informant interviews and field-level data collection, the findings of which were triangulated to form conclusions.

The findings show that targets were met, lives saved, and gains made through shortened supply chains by delegating responsibilities for PCAs. The findings also show that the marginalization of women and minorities from local and central institutions remains an issue in Somalia.

The evaluation makes a number of recommendations, including: (a) a capacity gap analysis of national and local governments, (b) further work on critical enablers for expanding programme delivery, (c) leveraging UNICEF cluster lead or co-lead positions to advocate for advancement of the cluster system and, (d) a 'convergence approach' for country office strategy, 2018-2021, with integrated programming as a key objective.

The findings point to the need for important changes in the current humanitarian response in Somalia. The results will help improve learning and accountability as the current emergency continues, and provide critical information for decision-making to improve efficiency of the response.